

Memo from  
JOSHUA LEDERBERG

To:  
Dr Edsall

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Priorities on CW control

This is an eloquent statement, and there is very little in its purposes that I could criticize. But my own priorities for concern would focus much more on binaries rather than leave them as an apparent afterthought. I would like to see other forms of CW, like herbicides and teargas, attended to; but your arguments about them apply a fortiori to bombs and bullets, and I think it is going to be difficult to make a very convincing case for focussing on them-- particularly when there doubtless are some applications of tear gas that indeed are more humane than available alternatives. Most recent discussion of these weapons has surely been by way of protest against U.S. involvement in Vietnam. At this point I find it difficult to see any special urgency in legislation against them. With the binaries however we are evidently on the threshold of a new technology race, which will be difficult or impossible to stop once it gets going.

There ought not to be any conflict between these objectives; but public attention is rather readily saturated, and in practice it may not be possible to achieve a high profile on all the important issues simultaneously.

Sincerely,



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